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SECRETARY OF DEFENSE WILLIAM J. PERRY
REMARKS AT BASE REUSE CEREMONY
FORT ORD, CA
JULY 8, 1994

Secretary Perry: Thank you very much, Rich.

I'd like to add one thing to the bio that Rich gave for me. While my degrees were from Stanford, my five children and my wife all attended either University of California, or California State University... (Applause) ... and accumulated a total of eight degrees from those great universities.

Today is truly a great day for this community, and for higher education in the State of California. This is democracy in action. This is good government at its best. I am proud for the small role I have been able to play in making this day happen.

I want to acknowledge, straight off, that Congressman Farr has played a large role in making this possible. He has been instrumental in working for solutions to all of the myriad problems that arose in the closing of Fort Ord.

The California congressional delegation and the Governor's delegation got in touch with President Clinton last summer. They wanted to discuss with him the bases that were being closed by the '93 Base Realignment and Closing Commission. The President described to them his five point program for facilitating the closing of these bases, of helping the communities that were affected by that. They told him that that was all very interesting, but indeed, there had been no real action taking place yet on most of the bases that had been closed in '88 and '91, and what was he going to do about that?

At that time, as the Deputy Secretary, I was busy working under the President's instructions developing concrete assistance programs for those bases that had been closed by the '93 BRAC. The President directed me to extend that program to the '88 and '91 base closures, and in particular, to get personally involved to see if I could help solve some of the problems for the inaction at Fort Ord.

I arranged, at that time, for detailed briefings from the Army as to what had already transpired here, and then, last September, scheduled a trip to Fort Ord to meet with the community leaders. Some of you who are here today were also present at that meeting in September. As you may remember, I came with both promises and challenges.

The promises I gave were, first of all, to establish Fort Ord as a model program in our redevelopment program. Secondly, to establish strong communication and a strong environment of trust between the Defense Department and the community. Third was to supplement and energize the Army teams that were working with you. Fourth was to provide funds for the reuse planning. Fifth was to coordinate actions of the different agencies of the U.S. Government. There are a panoply of agencies--a dozen or so--that affect this community, and it's extremely confusing for the community to try to work with these different agencies.

I said I would work to convey the property to the universities. I would do this quickly, and would convey these with no cost to the community. And I told you that I shared your vision of establishing a world-class university here, and that I would work to make that happen.

Along with these promises, I also laid down some challenges to the community. I said that all of these actions by the government were not enough unless the community also acted. In particular, I said nothing that we did could ultimately be of use unless this community could speak with a single voice to the government. Along with this, this community had to develop a detailed redevelopment plan, a reuse plan, which could serve as the architecture around which our programs could be attached.

We're here today because that is exactly what happened. The Defense Department kept its promises to this community, and this community met its challenges. The local community leaders, the state and federal agencies, the U.S. Army have shown extraordinary teamwork. You knocked down the obstacles, you built new bridges of community, and you created the Fort Ord Redevelopment Authority, the FORA, which is meeting here today.

FORA has representatives from eight different communities. Each of these communities is different. Each has its own perspective. But what everyone shared,

was a common goal--more jobs, a more diverse community, and creating a new university here.

Today we are significantly closer to realizing that goal. Today we can see both aspects of that saying that Samuel Johnson made several centuries ago when he said that, "Change is inconvenient, even if it is for the better."

For years now, you have seen the inconvenience aspect. Now, for the first time, you can begin to see hopes of the better.

Today's ceremony is what defense reinvestment is all about. With the ending of the Cold War, many communities across the nation have experienced the economic pain of seeing a local military base closed. In the Defense Department, we believe we have a special obligation not only to these communities, but to individuals in that community who helped us win the Cold War, including those living in the communities that hosted and supported military bases and facilities.

President Clinton's program to revitalize those communities help us meet that obligation. The heart of this program is transferring the property quickly and effectively from the military to the local community so they can get on with this redevelopment.

The President's program doesn't make that happen. What it did was empower the communities to create their own reuse plan. It empowers the communities to harness the resources already in their midst. And it empowers them to create the new jobs.

Today truly marks a major milestone in this base closure story. This property we will convey is estimated to have a value of about one billion dollars. The transfer of this property to the California State University and the University of California, allows them to jump start their plans for creating innovative new education institutions to develop citizens and leaders for tomorrow. It will also help create jobs for today.

Across this great state, there are similar efforts underway in other communities affected by base closures. At (inaudible) Air Force Base, for example, the community has made an innovative proposal to transfer 1,700 acres of land for job-creating reuse. This action is very different from the action underway here. It involves converting a military airfield into a commercial airport.

Similar reuse success stories are happening all over America, but I should also say that we see in other communities in America failures. These failures are, in every case, characterized by one factor. That is, the diverse interests of the community represented were not able to come together. They spent their time and

energies fighting with each other, even suing each other, instead of working together for a common purpose.

This community has risen above its diversity and is working together to achieve a common goal. You are leading the way and you are serving as a model for other communities all over the country. You have had to conquer many difficult, tough issues to bring us to where we are today. I should hasten to add that you have many difficult issues still ahead of you. This property transfer is just the beginning of a long, complex process.

I want to close by quoting from the British novelist Graham Greene. He said, "There always comes a moment in time when a door opens and lets the future in." The conveyance of this property opens such a door for this community. The future is out there, waiting to come in. By your actions, you can shape that future. You can shape it into a future of new jobs, a vibrant economy, and a world-class university and research center in your community.

Thank you very much.

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SECRETARY PERRY ATTENDS CEREMONY FOR

FIRST LAND TRANSFER AT FORT ORD

Secretary of Defense William J. Perry was the featured guest speaker today at a ceremony at Fort Ord, Calif. commemorating the first land transfer there to community redevelopment. The ceremony marks the first of many land transfers that will convey portions of the 44-square-mile military post to multiple recipients.

The first parcels of land--approximately 1,900 acres in all--will be transferred to California State University for its new Monterey Bay campus, scheduled to open in the fall of 1995, and to the University of California-Santa Cruz, which will develop a research facility.

Secretary Perry praised the quick conversion of Fort Ord to civilian use and called it a "model community project" because of the speed in which it has been accomplished. Secretary Perry said, "All base closure communities should strive for the same cooperative partnership among military, governmental, and community agencies as shown here at Fort Ord." He emphasized that early involvement and dialogue with communities are essential for reuse and economic recovery.

The Army was successful in obtaining full coordination and cooperation with community leaders around Fort Ord to reach agreements on complex issues involving environmental impact statements, multispecies habitat management, explosive waste remediation and personal property.

The decision to close Fort Ord was made by the 1991 Base Closure and Realignment Commission. Fort Ord is scheduled to close on September 30, 1994.

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